

Invasive Species

English Ivy



English Ivy is a woody vine from Europe that has been planted extensively for its evergreen foliage and because it is easy to grow in shady to full sun conditions. However, it can escape gardens and spread rapidly by vegetative growth and by birds that distribute its seeds. It quickly takes advantage of disturbed areas to shade-out and outcompete understory vegetation. It can also kill overstory trees after climbing in and dominating the canopy. Deciduous trees are particularly vulnerable to English ivy because the vines can take advantage of the extra light in winter after the tree's leaves have fallen and further shade the understory, preventing new saplings. The excess weight of the vines, which can grow up to 100 feet long, may cause additional damage to trees during winter storms. English Ivy can also affect local wildlife by displacing the plants they depend on. This plant has been invading the Pacific Northwest and is particularly a problem in regions near the coast. Once established in an area, English Ivy is very costly and labor intensive to eradicate. It can

overrun your garden, climb fences, invade your neighbor's yard, and invade nearby natural areas. The leaves and fruit are toxic to humans and animals. The sap can also irritate skin.

What can you do to help? For starters, don't plant it. The easiest way to prevent its spread is to not have it in the first place. If you have it, the OSU Extension Service office has some ideas to help get rid of it.

"If you've inherited a problem crop of English Ivy, you can crop it diligently to keep it from spreading or blooming, said Linda McMahan, Oregon State Extension Service horticulturist. If you want to eliminate it altogether, to be sure it isn't allowed to spread by someone less responsible in the future, your method needs to depend on how much you have and where it is.

If you have just groundcover, you may be able to pull it up by hand. If you have a large vine and cut the trunk, the upper plant will wither and die. Once it's dead and somewhat dried out, you can pull it off its base more easily.

Because English Ivy is evergreen and grows even during the winter, you can apply systemic herbicides like triclopyr and glyphosate any time of year as long as the temperature is above approximately 60 degrees. English Ivy has a very waxy leaf surface; this means that the most effective herbicides might be those mixed with a surfactant to help dissolve the wax, said McMahan. The plants show dieback within a week during warm weather or a few weeks when it's cool. You will most likely need to repeat applications for a dense mat.

Always be sure to follow the manufacturer's directions and safety measures explicitly when using herbicides."

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/news/english-ivy-invasive-weed-pacific-northwest>

The City works hard to keep English Ivy and other invasive species out of City rights-of-way and City properties. We would appreciate everyone's help in abating this invasive villain.

